

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM 25th September 2012

REPORT OF THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

WIRRAL LA HOME EDUCATION SERVICE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the statutory basis of the service, a description of the current service, a profile of its current students, and the budgets for the last two years.

Basis of the Service

The Home Education Service is a response to Section 9 of the Education Act 1966, which states that "each Local Authority shall make arrangements for the provision of suitable education for those children of compulsory school age who by reasons of illness may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them".

'Access to Education' (Guidance 2001) states that pupils "unable to attend school because of their medical needs should not be at home without access to education for more than 15 working days". There is a minimum entitlement of 5 hours teaching per week up to a maximum of 10 hours per week. Access to this entitlement will be dependant on the pupil's medical condition.

Scope of the Service

The Service works with students aged from 5 to 16 years of age. In 2013 the service this will change and provision will need to be made for students aged 5 to 17 years and will have budgetary implications.

Referral for Home Education on the grounds of medical need has to be made by a Consultant.

The vision statement of the Service is called "Working in Partnership for Continuity in Education". The Services' main aim is to minimise the disruption to a young person's education by working closely with his/her school so that he/she has access to the National Curriculum and feels confident when the time comes to return to school. The young person remains on their school roll. Re-integration after a long period of illness is supported by the Service working with schools and providing flexible arrangements, which take account of the young person's needs and wishes. This may include both school attendance and some Home Education.

The Service is currently free to schools; however, for those young people who are going to remain on Home Teaching for the whole of Year 11 a claim is made from the students' school for the AWPU.

The Headteacher of the Wirral Hospitals' School (which consists of Arrowe Park Children's Ward, Adcote House, Joseph Paxton and the 'Seedlings' provision) is also the Headteacher

of the Home Education Service. This means that there is an opportunity for a seamless pathway from hospital admission to home education and eventually a return to school. The Service is based at the Joseph Paxton Campus in Claughton.

Profile of the Students

The client profile for the service has changed over the years due to the change in medical treatment and the increasing ability of schools to cope with children who are temporarily confined to a wheelchair. There are now less young people who need Home Education because of broken bones.

There has been an increase in the number of students suffering from severe anxiety, depression and chronic fatigue. These are usually long term illnesses and require a long period of involvement from the service working closely with mental health services.

The Service works Connexions where students are n years 10 and 11 to ensure post 16 provision is in place and that they continue in education, employment or training.

The Service also provides bespoke education packages for young people who cannot attend school for non-medical reasons.

Budget

The nature of the Service is that the requirements of any one year are unpredictable, and budget figures are always based on previous years.

2010-2011	Budget	£285, 685.00
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2011-2012	Budget	£267, 546.00
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Recommendation

The Forum is asked to note the report

Julia Hassall
Acting Director of Children's Services